

PROTECT YOURSELF AND OTHERS

When pandemic flu strikes your community, take the temperature of every member of your household on a daily basis. Keep track of these temperature measurements. One of the earliest signs of flu infection is a high fever (over 101°F).

Flu viruses are most commonly transmitted through exposure to an infected person's coughing or sneezing. Masks might reduce your risk from pandemic influenza, when combined with other personal protection efforts.

- If you have a mask, wear it when you leave home when pandemic flu is in your community.
- Those who have the flu should wear a mask when in contact with others who do not have the flu.
- If you buy a mask, an N-95 mask may provide better protection.
- Masks should fit as per the manufacturer's recommendations. Most masks will not fit small children.
- Masks lose their protective properties and must be changed when they become wet from saliva or respiratory secretions.
- **Never** wash or disinfect masks.
- **Never** share masks with others

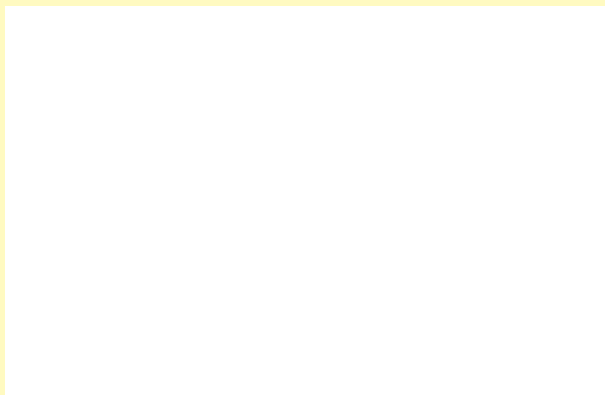


KNOWING THE FACTS IS THE BEST PREPARATION

Identify sources you can count on for reliable information. If a pandemic occurs, having accurate and reliable information will be critical.

Visit www.pandemicflu.gov for general information on pandemic flu and deploymentlink.osd.mil for information specific to service members and their families. Service members and their families who have concerns about pandemic influenza can get additional information by calling, toll-free, 1-800-497-6261.

Another source for information on pandemic influenza is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Hotline at: 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636). This line is available in English and Spanish, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. TTY: 1-888-232-6348. Questions can be e-mailed to cdcinfo@cdc.gov.



Force Health Protection & Readiness
Safeguarding the health of those who protect us



A Guide for Service Members and Families

*Be Prepared...Stay Healthy...
Get Informed*



PANDEMIC FLU

PANDEMIC FLU – WE ALL PLAY A ROLE IN FIGHTING THIS WAR!

While the federal, state and local governments are working hard to implement plans for responding to pandemic influenza, there are some steps that everyone can take that are necessary to protect you and your family.

PREPARE

There are many simple things you can do to prepare for pandemic influenza.

- Plan for the possibility that usual services may be disrupted. These could include medical services, banks, stores, restaurants, government offices, grocery stores, schools, daycare and post offices.
- Think about how you can rely less on transportation during a pandemic. Consider other ways to get to work, or, if you can, work from home.
- Find support systems—people who are thinking about the same issues you are thinking about. Share ideas.
- Prepare backup plans for taking care of loved ones who are far away.
- Consider how to care for people with special needs in case the services they rely on are not available.



- Stock a supply of water and food. During a pandemic you may not be able to get to a store. Even if you can get to a store, it may be out of supplies. Public waterworks services may also be interrupted. Stocking supplies can be useful in other types of emergencies, such as power outages and disasters.

Store foods that:

- are nonperishable (will keep for a long time) and don't require refrigeration
- are easy to prepare in case you are unable to cook
- require little or no water, so you can conserve water for drinking

MAKE GOOD HYGIENE A HABIT

Take common-sense steps to limit the spread of flu germs.

Hand washing is a simple way to prevent the spread of infection.

- Wash hands frequently and vigorously with soap and water.
- Use warm or hot water when possible. Cold water is not as effective for killing germs on your hands.
- First wet your hands, then apply liquid or clean bar soap.
- Work up a good lather and wash all of the surfaces of your skin, including the wrist, palms, backs of your hands, fingers, and fingernails. Wash your hands for at least 15 to 20 seconds.
- Rinse your hands thoroughly.
- Dry your hands. Use your paper towel to turn off the water after you have finished.

If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.

- Use enough gel to keep your hands wet for 30 seconds; rub your hands until the gel is dry.
- You don't need to use water; the alcohol in the gel kills the germs on your hands.

SIMPLE WAYS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF GERMS

- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Put used tissues in a wastebasket and empty it often.
- Cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve if you don't have a tissue.
- Clean your hands after coughing or sneezing. Use soap and water or an alcohol-based hand cleaner.
- Try not to touch your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs often spread this way.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too. Keeping at least three feet from those with flu can reduce your risk.
- If you get the flu, stay home from work, school, and social gatherings. This can help prevent others from catching your illness.

THINK YOU HAVE THE FLU?

If you develop flu-like symptoms or a fever, especially if are at high risk for complications of the flu, consult your health care provider. Those at high risk for severe complications include people 65-years or older, people with chronic medical conditions, pregnant women, and young children.

